

Jim is a new character I just thought of today, but I warn you, don't get too used to him. Don't try to get to know him, don't try to like him, because I'm gonna kill him. That is what I do. I invent people, and then I kill them

Jim walks with a limp, but don't worry about it. It doesn't matter that he does, and it doesn't matter why, because he's going to die

Okay, he was bit by a dog last week, that's why he limps. Okay? And it wasn't his fault at all. Nor is it his fault that he will die. He will die because he had the poor sense to be invented by me. He doesn't deserve to die. He is a nice guy with a lot of friends, and he is helpful and reliable. A lot of people count on him, and they will be sad when he dies in a few moments. And it is too bad for those people. Some of these people will also die, because they count on Jim, and Jim is going to die, and Jim won't be there when they need him, and so they will die too. So it will be a shame for these people. People I also invented. People like Jane, who has no arms. People like Jack, who has lung cancer. People like John, not me, a different John?, who is autistic. Jim is a friend to them all, and he helps them all in countless, invaluable ways. But it doesn't matter. None of it matters. I only bring these things and people up for only two reasons: so that as I write them down, I can think about exactly how Jim will die, and so that his meaningless death will have meaning

Would you like to know what Jim does for a living? So would I, let's see. Jim is independently wealthy. He, he doesn't have to work, but he does anyway. He does volunteer work. He helps out at the cancer ward, and in the section of the hospital where the people who have no arms live. And on the weekends, he works with autistic children like John (not me)

Does Jim have a love life? No. He is too busy and too shy. Does Jim have any pets? No. Are Jim's parents still alive? Yes. It will be tragic for them when Jim dies, maybe of a brain hemorrhage, I haven't decided yet

Okay, let's do it. This morning Jim was reading the paper. He was reading an article about the Congo, the country formerly known as Zaire, and he was drinking coffee and he spilled the coffee on himself, and it burned, it was very hot, and he jumped out of his chair, and he bumped his head on the wall somehow, and fell out of the window and landed on his bad leg, and limped into the street and got hit by an ambulance and left for dead, but he wasn't dead yet, he was just lying in the curb, and pigeon

ns came along and ate his eyes, and seagulls ripped his stomach out, and pelicans ate his liver, and his spleen popped out all on its own and turned into a harmonica and played a pleasant little tune. Then out came his pancreas, which turned into the dog that bit him last week, and it bit him again and again and again many times

Jim was writhing in agony, and just then Jack, Jane, and John (not me) walked by. But they didn't recognize him, so they did nothing. They could have saved him, but they were too distracted. They could have saved Jim, but they didn't; they left him dying there. So don't blame me, 'cause I wasn't even there. Jim was killed by his friends, really, because one of them stepped on his face as they walked by, and the other two kicked him, by accident, but still, they kicked him, one in an exposed part of his brain where a piece of his skull had come off, and the other in the testicles, which technically maybe wasn't a direct cause of death, but it sure didn't help matters any either. Jim recognized his friends, of course, but of course his throat was full of blood, and he was unable to call out their names. This made him unbearably, impossibly sad, and he lost the will to live, right then and there, and just right then, he died

Did he choke to death on his own blood and vomit? Perhaps. Did he die from the loss of his internal organs? You could say that, maybe. Did he die from the kick in the brain, or from getting hit by the ambulance? Well, look. Causes of death, like meanings of life, are mysterious and ineffable. We can speculate for the rest of the evening if you like, and one can attribute Jim's death to any number of assorted factors, but as for me, I like to think he died of a broken heart